Sex-determination tests

*376 PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court has recently directed the States to take action against clinics which resort to sex-determination advertisements;

(b) if so, the action taken by his Ministry;

(c) whether his Ministry has evolved any mechanism to stop such clinics from giving publicity to sex-determination tests;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SHATRUGHAN SINHA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. While hearing a PIL (Writ Petition No. 301 of 2000 filed by CEHAT and Others v/s Union of India and Others) on 7.10.2002, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, *inter-alia*, stated that the learned counsel for the petitioners has pointed out that some of the States/UTs particularly the States of Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Delhi are not stopping the advertisements in the newspaper issued by some clinics for carrying out sex-determination and/or abortion. Therefore, the Hon'ble Supreme Court directed the competent authorities of the States/UTs to take appropriate action against such clinics.

Advertisements regarding facilities of pre-natal determination of sex of unborn child are prohibited under Section 22 of the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994. The Act also prescribes punishments for contravening its provisions with imprisonment upto 5 years and fine upto Rs. 50,000/-

Since implementation of the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994 rests with States/UTs., all the States/UTs have been advised to take action as per the directions of the Court and to implement various provisions of the said Act. States/ UTs have also been advised to launch prosecution against the violators of the provisions of the said Act. According to the reports received from States/UTs, 305 ultrasound machines have been sealed/seized and

373 cases have been filed with the Police/Courts including cases filed for issuing/publishing advertisements in violation of the provisions of the Act.

A National Inspection and Monitoring Committee has also been set up to keep a constant watch on all States and UTs for implementation of the PNDT Act and compliance of the directions of the Supreme Court of India. The committee makes surprise visits to clinics all over India to oversee the implementation of the law.

Besides, various activities are being undertaken regularly for creating public awareness about the provisions of the PNDT Act through Government media *viz.* Radio, TV and other media units. Various stations of AIR are broadcasting spots, group discussions, talks and panel discussions on PNDT Act in various languages.

Efficacy of contraceptive RISUG

*377. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the male injectible contraceptive RISUG is under the threat of ban;

(b) whether it is also a fact that premier hospitals in India have given a clean chit to the drug; and

(c) if so, whether Government would examine the efficacy of the new drug?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SHATRUGHAN SINHA): (a) to (c) The Male injectible contraceptive RISUG is under clinical evaluation.

Limited Phase III Clinical Trial aiming to enroll 150 volunteers for intravasal injection of male contraceptive RISUG is on going at 3 centres at Delhi. 141 healthy volunteers have been enrolled. Data on 63 cases who had completed 6 months of treatment at these three centres revealed four method failure; presence of albumin in urine in 6 cases; and 75% of the subjects experienced scrotal swelling and pain for a period over one month. Semen morphology analysis revealed presence of few abnormal sperms, which may fertilize the ovum leading to genetically defective child or abortion in the late pregnancy.